

**Minutes of Regular Meeting of the El Dorado School Board  
February 14, 2011**

The directors of the board met on the above date at 7:00 p.m. in the Board Room, School Administration Building, 200 West Oak Street, with Vicky Dobson presiding. Other directors present were Wayne Gibson, Larry Holder, Renee Skinner, Susan Turbeville, and Will Vance. Director Joey Bauman was absent. Also attending was Supt. Bob Watson, Rhonda Simmons, Shirley Billingly, Bonnie Haynie, Sylvia Thompson, Angie Drummond, and Lou Ann Voris.

Mrs. Dobson asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes of the meetings held January 13 and January 31. On a motion by Wayne Gibson, seconded by Susan Turbeville, and carried on a 6-0 vote, the minutes were approved.

The board reviewed the monthly bills. After some discussion and on a motion by Wayne Gibson, seconded by Larry Holder, and carried on a 6-0 vote, the bills were approved for payment. A list of bills paid and monthly financial statement are on file in the business office.

Mrs. Dobson introduced Mekaylan Hicks as Student of the Month. Mekaylan is the daughter of Tequila Hicks and in the sixth grade at Washington Middle School. According to Cori Martinez, her English teacher, Mekaylan always walks into class smiling and with a wonderful attitude that makes everyone around her feel better. She listens, follows procedures perfectly, and always participates in meaningful classroom discussion. Mekaylan is very organized with her work. She is always prepared for her lessons and involved in every way. Her principal, Mrs. Vines said that Mekaylan is a great role model for fellow students. She has excellent grades and is continually aspiring to learn more. Her personality allows her to make those around her feel happy. Washington Middle School staff and students are delighted that Mekaylan Hicks was chosen Student of the Month. Mrs. Dobson presented her with a certificate from the board.

Mr. Watson reminded the board that last month he discussed with the board the district budget deficit for the upcoming school year. In order to achieve a balanced budget for the 2011-2012 school year there is a need of approximately \$540,000 to cover the needs for increased costs over the anticipated increase in revenues. He asked for their consideration and vote regarding moving the forty-four fifth and sixth graders at Union School to Washington Middle School and eliminating focus coordinator positions for the next school year. He mentioned another way to cut expenses is by reducing the extra duty pay by \$50,000.

Mr. Watson said that moving Union's fifth and sixth grade students to Washington will save the district about \$145,000 and eliminating focus coordinator positions will save the district \$316,800. Increased costs for the upcoming school year include \$160,000 to honor the current salary schedule, \$210,000 to purchase buses, and \$370,000 for increased costs at the new high school – which include custodial, utilities, and insurance. It was discussed that increased fuel costs will be a consideration, too.

Mr. Watson noted that based on the increase in assessed values for the next school year, we are continuing to only anticipate an increase in tax dollars of approximately \$70,000. Also, we anticipate about \$45,000 in new state foundation dollars based on the figure of increased per current student enrollment. We are also anticipating the use of the \$81,000 received in the current year from declining enrollment, Mr. Watson said. After a time of discussion and on a motion by Larry Holder, seconded by Will Vance, and carried on a 6-0 vote, it was,

RESOLVED, That the board hereby approves working toward balancing the 2011-2012 district budget by moving the Union 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades to Washington Middle School, eliminating focus coordinator positions, and a \$50,000 reduction in extra duty pay.

Tim Dover, Blake Dennison, and Shannon Dollar with Business Communications, Inc. visited with the board about providing connectivity and wireless internet to the new high school. The quote for the service is \$340,328.78. Mr. Dover said this includes infrastructure for today and the future. His company will install gear, configure it, conduct testing on the system, and be there for as long as the district needs them. The company specializes in kindergarten through twelfth grade resources, do networking and cable setting, and will provide support for one year. With offices in Jackson, Mississippi, Little Rock, and New Orleans – BCI is a nationwide, self-performing, and full turn-key service provider. Mr. Dennison and Mr. Dollar noted this is the best solution for the school and BCI has provided technology in Arkansas for schools in Cabot, Little Rock, Greenwood, and Bald Knob. They noted they do lots of wireless services.

Mr. Watson told board members that he met several times with employees of BCI and this company is heavily into Cisco – and we believe in that product. BCI is Cisco certified and was recognized by Cisco for excellence in customer satisfaction. They are a part of the TIP/TAPS program with their services and product having already been bid and with BCI being the low bidder. We like the support they can bring to the table and looking at their service – they have very sophisticated programs, Mr. Watson said. Services provided by the company will be funded with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act stimulus money received by the school district. After some discussion and on a motion by Susan Turbeville, seconded by Renee Skinner, and carried on a 6-0 vote, it was

RESOLVED, That the board hereby approves the quote of \$340,328.78 from Business Communications, Inc. (BCI) in providing connectivity and wireless internet for the new high school.

Sylvia Thompson, El Dorado Promise director, explained to the board that many of the first year Promise students will be graduating from college this year. The Promise is a \$50 million scholarship program funded by Murphy Oil Corporation for graduates of El Dorado High School. The program was announced in January 2007 and the 2007 graduating class was the first to receive Promise funds. Mrs. Thompson said a project involving the El Dorado Promise office, Murphy Oil, and the El Dorado Chamber of Commerce will include mail-outs to all EHS 2007 graduates who are receiving Promise money. The mail-out will list businesses in El Dorado and contact information for job openings. Mrs. Thompson said project coordinators are expectant that local businesses will send descriptions of their company and types of jobs available for the mail-out. Hopefully many of those graduates will return to Union County to live and work.

Bonnie Haynie spoke with the board about the proposal to alter the Advanced Placement grading scale to include International Baccalaureate, which is required by law. By making this change the district will be in line with the recommended policies as prepared by the Arkansas School Boards Associations policies service. Mrs. Haynie noted students who transfer into the district will be given weighted credit for the Advanced Placement courses, International Baccalaureate courses, or honors courses approved by the Arkansas Department of Education, and concurrent college courses taken for weighted credit at his/her previous school(s) according to the scale given to board members. The policy with grading scale will be on file in the superintendent's office and included in the 2011-2012 District Policies Handbook. On a motion by Larry Holder, seconded by Wayne Gibson, and carried on a 6-0 vote, it was

RESOLVED, That the board hereby approves International Baccalaureate, with grading scale, to be included in the Advanced Placement policy.

Mr. Watson said that five “snow days” were missed this school year. After considering the week of spring break, Good Friday, and Saturday as considerations, he was recommending making up the days at the end of the school year. He reminded board members this way of making up any lost time is noted on the district calendar and approved by the board each spring. His recommendation for making up the snow days will be May 25, 26, 27, 30 (Memorial Day) and 31 with final exams to be held on those days. He noted there is an option to take the Memorial Day holiday off and listing the final day for students on June 1. After much discussion and on a motion by Susan Turbeville, seconded by Will Vance, and carried on a 6-0 vote, it was

RESOLVED, That the board hereby approves the five inclement weather make-up days to be May 25, 26, 27, 30, and 31.

The meeting adjourned to an executive session to discuss personnel matters, then reconvened to an open meeting. On a motion by Susan Turbeville, seconded by Larry Holder, and carried on a 6-0 vote, it was

RESOLVED, That the board hereby approves the superintendent's recommendations concerning the acceptance of resignations and the employment of new personnel, and the re-employment of administrative staff and chairs.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.